

Having thus described the invention, we hereby claim:

1. A method for use in a printing system supporting line-conditioned data stream (LCDS) data, the printing system being in communication with an LCDS source and a plurality of network components, the method comprising the steps of:
 - receiving network data from the plurality of network components, the
 - 5 network data representing network print jobs;
 - receiving line-conditioned data stream data from one of the LCDS source and the plurality of network components, the line-conditioned data stream data representing LCDS jobs;
 - scheduling the network print jobs and the LCDS jobs for processing by
 - 10 the printing system;
 - sequentially processing the network print jobs and the container print job based on the scheduling;
 - designating the LCDS job as a container print job;
 - creating at least one job entity based on the container print job;
 - 15 processing the container print job by processing the at least one job entity;
 - monitoring a status of the processing of the at least one job entity; and,
 - selectively manipulating the at least one job entity by an operator.
2. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the creating of the at least one job entity includes identifying a marker located in the line-conditioned data stream corresponding to each job entity.
3. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the creating of the at least one job entity includes creating control structures for printing.
4. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein, during the processing of the at least one job entity, additional network jobs and container jobs are scheduled.
5. The method as set forth in claim 4 wherein processing of the additional network jobs and container jobs occurs only after termination of the processing of the at least one job entity.
6. The method as set forth in claim 5 wherein terminating the processing of the at least one job entity comprises switching the printing system off-line.

7. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the scheduling is based on a predetermined protocol.

8. The method as set forth in claim 1 further comprising registering the at least one job entity on a print service module.

9. The method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the monitoring of the status of the container job includes monitoring a collective status of the processing of the at least one job entity.

10. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the container job possesses attributes which are inherited by the at least one job entity, and further wherein the manipulating comprises modifying the attributes.

11. A printing system supporting line-conditioned data stream (LCDS) data, the printing system being in communication with an LCDS source and a plurality of network components, the system comprising:

- means for receiving network data from the plurality of network
- 5 components, the network data representing network print jobs;
- means for receiving line-conditioned data stream data from one of the LCDS source and the plurality of network components, the line-conditioned data stream data representing LCDS jobs;
- means for scheduling the network print jobs and the LCDS job for
- 10 processing by the printing system;
- means for sequentially processing the network print jobs and the LCDS job based on the scheduling;
- means for designating the LCDS job as a container print job;
- means for creating at least one job entity based on the container print job;
- 15 means for processing the container print job by processing the at least one job entity;
- means for monitoring a status of the processing of the at least one job entity; and,
- means for selectively manipulating the at least one job entity by an
- 20 operator.

12. The system as set forth in claim 11 wherein a marker is located in the line-conditioned data stream corresponding to each job entity.

13. A printing system supporting line-conditioned data stream (LCDS) data, the printing system being in communication with an LCDS source and a plurality of network components, the system comprising:

- 5 a first gateway operative to receive network data from the plurality of network components, the network data representing first print jobs;
- a second gateway operative to receive line-conditioned data stream data from the LCDS source;
- 10 a print service and control module operative to designate the line-conditioned data stream data as a second print job and schedule the first and second print jobs for processing by the printing system;
- 15 a decomposer operative to process the first and second print jobs based on the schedule, determine that the second print job is to be processed as a container print job, create third print jobs based on the second print job, process the second print job by processing the third print jobs, and report status and job information to the print service and control module; and,
- an interface operative to facilitate manipulation of the third jobs.

14. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein a marker is located in the line-conditioned data stream corresponding to each third job.

15. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein the print service and control modules are operative to create control structures for printing the third jobs.

16. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein, during the processing of the third jobs, the print service and control modules are operative to schedule additional first and second jobs received through the first and second gateways.

17. The system as set forth in claim 16 wherein the decomposer is operative to process the additional first and second jobs only after termination of the processing of the third jobs.

18. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein the LCDS source is a mainframe system.

19. The system as set forth in claim 13 wherein the second job possesses attributes which are inherited by the third jobs.

